

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 070

WEDNESDAY MARCH 10, 2004

www.saipantribune.com **50¢**

I N S I D E

See NORITA on Page 8

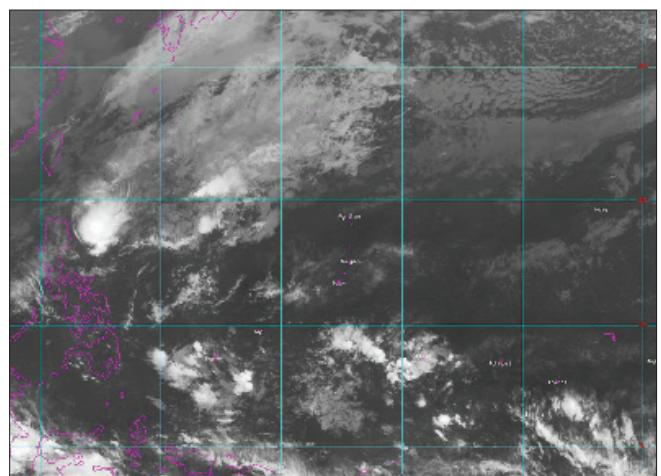
See HOUSE on Page 8

Local

PTC-CAPRICCIOSA

CARS UNLIMITED

CENTURY
TRAVEL

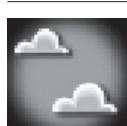

**COMMUNITY
Briefs**
WEATHER FORECAST

PICTURE TIME: 1:00 AM., MARCH 9, 2004

Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Fresh to strong trade winds across much of Micronesia converging into lighter winds near the Equator are producing scattered showers between the Equator and 8N from 130E to 153 and between the Equator and 6N from 160E to 180. A cold front stretches from 25N 161E to 20N 146E and continues as a shear line to 19N 130E. Low- and mid-level clouds...light rain and showers associated with this feature extend up to 200 miles north of the boundary. Trade wind convergence south of the cold front/shear line is producing low clouds and showers between 12N and 18N from 132E to 150E. This area includes the Mariana Islands.


SAIPAN AND TINIAN

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.

GUAM AND ROTA

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.

PALAU

Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.

POHNPEI

Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.

YAP AND ULITHI

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

KOSRAE

Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

CHUUK

Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

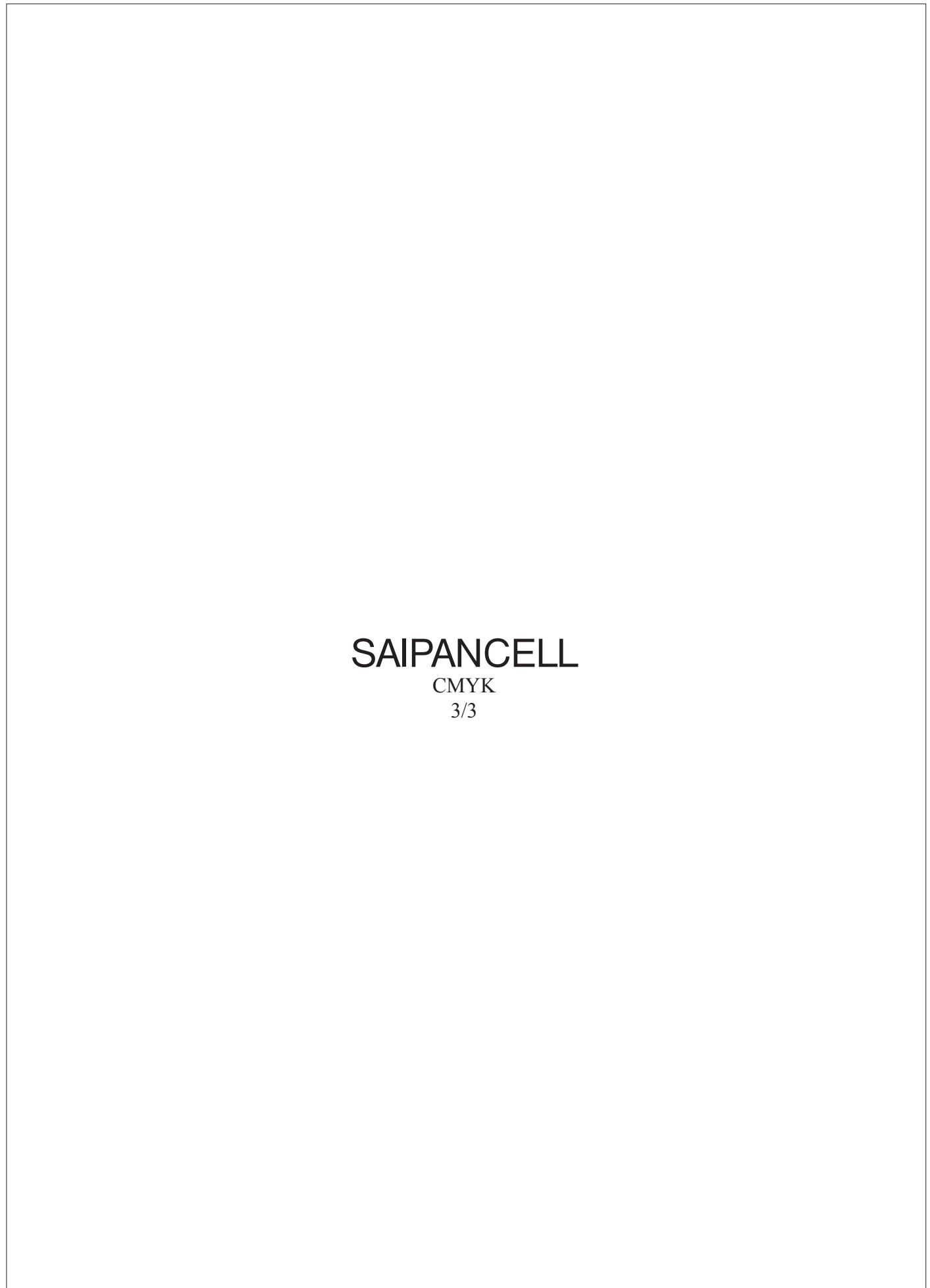
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.

MAJURO

Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.

Winds: East at 15-20 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
Auckland	Sunny	71F (22C)	60F (16C)
Beijing	Sunny	65F (18C)	48F (9C)
Hong Kong	Sunny	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	68F (20C)
London, England	Sunny	45F (7C)	30F (-1C)
Los Angeles	Sunny	79F (26C)	59F (15C)
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88F (31C)	73F (23C)
Melbourne	Sunny	75F (24C)	59F (15C)
Miami	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	54F (12C)
New York City	Cloudy	40F (4C)	34F (1C)
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	37F (3C)	25F (-4C)
Paris	Partly Cloudy	38F (3C)	25F (-4C)
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	53F (12C)	39F (4C)
Rome	Cloudy	49F (9C)	30F (-1C)
Salem, Oregon	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	40F (4C)
San Francisco	Sunny	68F (20C)	52F (11C)
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	47F (8C)	35F (2C)
Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	36F (2C)
Washington, DC	Cloudy	45F (7C)	34F (1C)



SAIPANCELL
CMYK
3/3

Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 134

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

John Pangelinan PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Hooked

So, gasoline could be \$3 a gallon by the end of the summer. Gak! It's almost enough to make you hope that President Bush really does have a secret deal with the Saudis to turn on the oil spigots right before the election, as Bob Woodward reports.

Actually, it's not clear how much or how quickly it would help if OPEC boosted the supply of crude oil, since the pump price is also driven by a shortage of refineries in this country. Even so, it would be only a short-term fix. Good for Bush's re-election prospects, perhaps, but just a little kick of the can down the road to postpone facing up to the reality of cheap fuel.

It's running out. And the sooner we get serious about making the transition to something other than the carbon combustion engine, the easier that transition is going to be.

Most politicians won't acknowledge that because it's not what voters want to hear.

The Bush administration gives lip service to alternative fuels, such as hydrogen—as well as a token investment in research—but is proposing to drill, mine or tap every U.S. source of fossil fuel first. Hardly an approach that encourages private investment in alternatives.

Sen. John Kerry, Bush's likely Democratic opponent, has focused on criticizing the president's cozy relationship with the Saudis and calling on the administration to stop buying crude oil for the nation's strategic reserve supply—a short-sighted solution if ever there was one.

"We are hooked," says New Mexico Sen. Pete V. Domenici, "and we cannot even do the most incremental steps to begin to address this plight."

Sticker shock at the pumps might finally break through what Domenici calls the "psychological barrier" to action.

He, like Bush, favors more domestic drilling. There is also talk in Congress of reducing regulations to encourage the building of additional refineries. But a far wiser approach would be to reduce the thundering demand for oil, which is 5 percent higher in the United States this year than last, and growing in China.

The most encouraging development in that direction is the trend toward hybrid vehicles, which use electric power to supplement and reduce gasoline use. To his credit, Kerry is encouraging U.S. automakers to go more aggressively after that market, which promises a double reward to the U.S. economy in the form of jobs as well as more stable fuel prices.

But hybrids, too, are only an interim solution. Neither they, nor hydrogen cars in their initial incarnation, nor plant-based fuels such as ethanol (a big passion for lawmakers from corn states) can function without some reliance on fossil fuels.

A much higher priority must be placed on developing the technology to meet transportation and other energy needs with a whole lot less oil. Because someday, "scarce" may become "none at all."



What good is leaving Iraq mess in UN's lap?

By DENNIS C. JETT

Special to Newsday

What a difference a year makes. Just over 12 months ago, President Bush swaggered across the flight deck of the Abraham Lincoln and declared victory in the battle of Iraq. The coalition forces seemed firmly in control. The Iraqi army was disbanded and members of Saddam Hussein's Baath Party were kicked out of the government. The American authorities began to map out the route to democracy without bothering to consult with any Iraqis besides a few favorite exiles.

Now things look decidedly different. Last month was the bloodiest one by far since the invasion began. The Marines have had to back off threatening to level Fallujah in retaliation for the mutilation of the four captured American contractors, and instead have turned the city over to an all-Iraqi force led by former Iraqi army officers.

And then came the shocking images of our treatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib, the same prison that was notorious under Saddam's regime. Now it's become a disturbing symbol of America's occupation of Iraq.

It's a sign of the times that the Pentagon's favored candidate for Iraqi president, Ahmad Chalabi, has begun criticizing U.S. policy. Instead of fabricating intelligence for U.S. officials, as he did to provide an excuse for the war, he is said to be courting a new patron by providing sensitive information to Iran.

But here is an administration dominated by people with contempt for any international action that requires compromise, now trying to hand over the political future of Iraq to the United Nations. The continuing violence, the scheming self-promoters and a local government that is weak-to-nonexistent does not bode well for the chances that the United Nations will succeed where the Americans have not.

On June 30, the Coalition Provisional Authority—the name the American-led forces running the country have given themselves—will turn over sovereignty to an interim Iraqi government. The date is set and the ceremony will take place as scheduled because the American elections are driving the timetable—not the prospects for elections in Iraq. They won't happen before January at the earliest.

The June 30 event will transfer sovereignty without power to a government without legitimacy. It will consist of whomever the U.N. Special Envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi, can get to accept the job. He will decide by the end of this month who will be the interim president, prime minister and the two vice presidents. They will hold those jobs until the elections produce a transitional assembly, which will then decide on a constitution and put a permanent government in place by the end of 2005.

Whomever Brahimi names won't control Iraq's economy, security or political destiny. It is not clear who will be running Iraq's economy other than the American contractors that do now. The Pentagon is not planning on reducing troop numbers before the

permanent government takes office a year and a half from now. The State Department will have to make many of the political decisions, because an interim government without popular support or the power to make laws cannot.

In the longer term, Iraq's political future will depend on whether the United Nations can orchestrate successful elections. It is a multi-lateral organization staffed by international bureaucrats, not miracle workers. The United Nations does not do well in what the military would call a non permissive environment. It is rarely given the troops, resources and mandate necessary to impose peace, so anyone willing to use violence can disrupt and often prevent what the United Nations is trying to accomplish. The bombing of the U.N. offices in Baghdad last year, which prompted an evacuation of the staff who survived, is a case in point.

Normally, in helping countries after a conflict, the United Nations provides peacekeepers, assists economic reconstruction and guides a political process designed to result in a government with legitimacy. In the case of Iraq, the fact that it is only being given the last task does not mean chances for success will be better.

Because of its institutional limitations and the weak hand it usually has to play, the United Nations can really affect things only at the margin in a post-conflict situation. The real determinants of success or failure are the local actors, the country's resources and outside forces that might seek to influence the situation.

The local actors have to agree that elections are the route to forming a government that is accepted widely enough to be able to rule. Most important, the political leaders have to agree that they can lose an election that is nonetheless free and fair. The only thing that has united most Iraqis recently is their desire to see coalition troops leave. They will have to think of themselves as Iraqis first, and Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds second, long enough for elections to take place. And all three communities and their leaders will have to set aside past grievances and accept the outcome regardless of who comes out on top.

Washington asserts that mostly only a few foreign terrorists, criminals and remnants of Saddam's regime are carrying out the attacks on coalition forces rather than a more general, popular uprising. Even if that is the case, the attackers will have to be subdued by force, as they are unlikely to be impressed by the United Nations' new role. If the terrorists, criminals and remnants hide in urban areas, coalition forces will have to find them and eliminate them rather than reach an accommodation, as seems to be happening in Fallujah. Unless there are Iraqis willing to die for the good of the American occupation, any Iraqi force is unlikely to confront the insurgents and U.S. troops will have to do it.

Jett is dean of the International Center and director of the Transnational and Global Studies Center at the University of Florida and a State Department veteran.

By FRANCES SABLON

The views expressed are strictly that of the author. Sablon is the coordinator for the Public School System's Advanced Development Institute.



Teacher Appreciation

Last week was Teacher Appreciation Week. It came and went with some giving full recognition, partial or none at all. Although it's after the designated official week, I'd like to recognize all the teachers in the Commonwealth, Marianas and all over the world. You made a difference in our lives, our children, youth, adults and elders.

Some of you are Teachers by profession, yet many are teachers of the heart and for life. You are so willing and eager to share your Talents, Experiences And Caring Heart Every Round.

When I think of all my teachers, parents and colleagues, I am mindful of the following thoughts, characteristics and qualities:

Tough, tender touch, thoughtful, timely, trustworthy, trend setter, tester, time on task, test of time, tackler, thankful, tutor, thought provoking

Extraordinary, encouraging, exciting, experienced, eternal, equitable, easygoing, energized, eager, enthused

Angellic, adventurer, amazing, advisor, actor/actress, author, awesome, advance, alert, accelerated, all around

Caring, charming, clever, classic, classy, classroom manager, clear, concise, creative, cautious, chatter box, congratulatory remarks

Humble, honest, hands on, hard, hopeful, (giver of invisible) hugs, honored, heavenly, (has a lot of) heart, high fives

Exams, essays, explainer, excellence, explorer, expeditious, expert in his/her field

Real, respectful, rock, rugged, resourceful, risk taker, reader, researcher, reviewer, refuge, reliever, revered, responsible, reliable, reporter, refine, red roses, readiness, ridiculous & radical (at times), retriever, role model

These are but a few descriptors. There are much more beautiful and fine ones not mentioned. You are all those too (the positive aspects that is).

Happy Teacher's Appreciation Week all year round!

By MOHAMMAD ASHRAF, PH.D.

Ashraf is an International Resource Economist. He is solely responsible for the views expressed in this column and doesn't represent the views of Saipan Tribune. His email address is ashmdr@hotmail.com



The CNMI's labor policy

Q Dear Dr. Ashraf, I read your Q & A column regularly and I find it very informative in regards to our social and economic issues. Would you please comment on our labor policy?

A Local control over immigration is one of the key elements of the Covenant the CNMI negotiated with the United States at the time of joining THE political family of this great nation. Crafters of the Covenant knew what development challenges the CNMI faces due to its isolated geographic location and small size. I believe this feature of the Covenant is quite significant to bridge the income, standard of living, and the overall level of development gap between people of the CNMI and rest of the nation expeditiously.

Questions have been and continue to loom as to how well the CNMI developed and implemented its labor policy to advance its development. A high level of unemployment among locals and allegations of labor abuses receiving national publicity cast doubts on the minds of people on the appropriateness of our labor policy.

The publicity of labor abuses, whether real or not, has severely tarnished the otherwise hospitable and accommodating image of the people of CNMI. At the peak of this bad publicity, traveling abroad enabled one to hear many negative comments and expressions contrary to the reality of the CNMI being a serene and hospitable tropical paradise. At the local scene, the question of unemployment of locals continues to haunt politicians and they are looking for answers desperately. One answer that keeps coming up is to raise minimum wages, which is highly controversial and debatable option. Anyhow, labor policy needs to be carefully reviewed or perhaps rewritten to advance our development in a socially desired manner.

Productivity paradox

When the going gets tough, organizations typically do a knee-jerk reaction to cut cost without considering the long-term impact. Business owners have an economic responsibility to remain profitable, and one of their largest expenses is payroll. So to survive, top management may feel that it only makes sense to get the ax out and start trimming personnel costs through a reduction in force (RIF) or by cutting benefits.

A RIF is unpopular because it also creates morale problems and puts a heavier burden on the "lucky" souls left behind. For politicians, it is career suicide—especially prior to an election—and so it is discussed in theory but rarely seen in practice. That is why the infamous firing of 11 personnel by the enigmatic Ken Wright struck fear in the hearts of not only NMC staff and faculty, it sent a shock wave throughout the government community. Government employees questioned, maybe for the first time, that if this happened to their compatriots, could it or would it happen to them?

Organizational euthanasia is an attempt to fix a money crunch problem or boost productivity, and employers throw people overboard in a last ditch attempt to save their sinking institution. These efforts are shrouded in euphemistic terms such as "lay-offs," "downsizing," or "rightsizing" but they all mean the same thing: People lose their jobs.

Does it really help? Here are some things to consider before using this tactic:

- In a study conducted by the American Management Association, only 43 percent of 547 organizations that had downsized experienced an improvement in profitability.

- Another study revealed that 75 percent of downsized companies believed their performance did not improve, and another 67 percent reported no productivity increase.

- An article in the Human Resource magazine by Kenneth P. DeMeuse, et al, stressed that firms that had large-scale layoffs did not show financial improvement. "Rather, their performance continues to decline following announcement and at a greater degree than firms that had no layoff announcements."

From these studies, and looking back at Wright's debacle and the situation he placed the college in before bailing out, one begs the question: Is a RIF the best answer? Desperate cost-cutting measures or a RIF can create what is called a "productivity paradox." Despite the initial cost savings, organizations appear to be no better off than before, and many times the situation is worse.

Even the term "reorganization" has become synonymous with

By RIK and JANEL VILLEGRAS

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is the owner of Positively Outrageous Results. They have consulted with over 400 businesses in 40 different industries. For better business results go to BizResults.biz to read previous articles.



RIF, because companies that reorganize subsequently downsize and also experience the productivity paradox. Productivity plummets along with morale, and paranoia spreads among the remaining "survivors."

When an on-island bank was going through corporate "reengineering" several years ago, no one in the organization knew if his or her job was secure. We were friends with the local manager, and he was even paranoid about losing his job. Even though the angel of termination passed over his position, the low morale and the crass manner that headquarters had treated him and those in his charge eventually caused him to resign and work for another bank.

We are not saying that a RIF should not be considered, but that the psychological damage to individuals loyal to an organization must be weighed against the dollars saved from cutting costs. Feelings such as shock, fear, anger, and depression are not conducive for high productivity. Instead of thinking about the job, people spend their efforts talking about what's going to happen next, or looking for other work.

Like zombies, "survivors" tend to quit in spirit, but still show up to work in body to pick up their paycheck. Companies that are desperate to cut costs are operating at the "survival" level of human needs and will create a survival-type atmosphere within the organization.

Organizations would achieve greater results if they first sought to understand the needs of their team and then applied motivational methods that inspire champions. We tend to work harder for people than we do for money. One of the most powerful motivating factors is the confidence of those we serve and those who cheer for us. People are anxious to be part of a winning team and will exert great energy for the chance of a comeback. Create an atmosphere of winners instead of survivors. There is little difference in the effort between the two, but a substantial difference in the bottom line.

China's stand may prove unhealthful for Taiwan

By DENNIS V. HICKEY

Special to the Los Angeles Times

Once again, China is gearing up to block Taiwan's annual bid to rejoin the World Health Organization. For Taipei, the stakes are high. Taiwanese medical authorities are unable to gain access to vital medical information to fight infectious diseases, and, should the island suffer an outbreak of disease, Taiwan is ineligible for assistance because it is excluded from the WHO. As in the past, Beijing will advance a variety of arguments in an effort to justify this hostile behavior. But none will hold up under close examination.

China will argue that Taiwan cannot rejoin the United Nations' health agency because it is not a sovereign state and forfeited its seat in the WHO when it left the United Nations in 1971. By any accepted definition of the term, however, Taiwan is a state. It exercises predominant authority within its borders, possesses a relatively stable population that both holds elections and owes allegiance to the Taipei government, and maintains formal diplomatic relations with about 30 other countries and close unofficial links with many others.

Irrespective of this fact, however, one must remember that Taiwan is not even seeking to rejoin the WHO as a state. It is seeking to rejoin only as a "health entity" with "observer status." The Holy See, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and the International Committee of the Red Cross are among those with observer status. Moreover, Puerto Rico and Tokelau participate as "associate members."

China already has reluctantly agreed to Taiwan's participation in the World Trade Organization as a "customs territory." And although Beijing is pressuring the Office International des Epizooties, the world animal health organization, to downgrade Taiwan's membership to a "quarantine territory," it is not seeking Taiwan's ouster from the group.

So why can't Beijing acquiesce to Taiwan's participation in the WHO as a "health entity" with "observer status?"

When confronted with such facts, Chinese representatives generally shift gears and argue that Taiwan cannot participate in the WHO because it should seek medical assistance from "the central government" in Beijing in a medical emergency. But this argument ignores the fact that the present regime in Beijing has never exercised any control over Taiwan, has never written its laws or funded its government—and is not accepted by the people of Taiwan as having any authority within its borders. In fact, a growing number of Taiwanese—including some in the highest levels of the government—support the island's de jure separation from China.

Furthermore, it is unlikely that China is capable of offering medical assistance. When the SARS epidemic swept Asia in 2003, many Taiwanese saw in China's response the deplorable level of medical care there, and in a crisis would probably want no part of it. According to many accounts, medical care in China has deteriorated sharply over the last two decades and shows no sign of improvement.

Finally, China will suggest that there is no need for Taiwan to participate in the WHO because it already enjoys a high standard of public health and has enough access to health information. But this argument ignores the island's pressing need for medical assistance during national emergencies like the 1999 earthquake and the 2003 SARS epidemic. It also ignores the many health contributions that Taiwan could make to the international community.

Despite the fallacy of its arguments, China still will seek to block Taiwan's admission to the WHO. This represents only one part of its continuing campaign to strip Taiwan of any vestiges of statehood. But Beijing is worried. It knows that the time is fast approaching when the global community will no longer cave in to its pressure.

A growing number of countries—led by the United States—agree that it is in every nation's best interest to support Taiwan's application for observer status in the WHO and to help find ways for the island's voice to be heard in it.

Hickey is professor of political science and university fellow in research at Southwest Missouri State University.

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

annual rate of \$182. Off-island subscription rate is \$376 per year. For additional subscription information, call 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740. **ADVERTISING**

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235-3740. E-mail: editor.tribune@vzpacifica.net. Website: www.saipantribune.com **CUSTOMER SERVICE** For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740. **SUBSCRIPTION** Published Monday to Sunday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an

START

From Page 1

Farmers donate produce to *man'amko*

By CASSIE FEJERAN
REPORTER

The CNMI senior citizens—*man'amko*—were on the receiving end of a donation of about \$400 worth of fruits and vegetables on Tuesday, courtesy of various farmers on island.

The donation was one of many activities farmers on island are doing this month to celebrate *Mes Lancheros*, or Farmers Month. The donation came courtesy of 13 farmers.

Saipan Agricultural Fair Association member Vicente Borja said the donation is a way for the farmers to “give back to the community.”

“We wanted to start with the *man'amko* because we, the generation of today, will not be able to get into these things, like farming [without them]...It is very much a part of our local culture,” said Borja. “That’s one way of showing our appreciation, by sharing the abundance.”

Office of Aging director Joseph Palacios said the donation would enable the office to divert money used to buy fruits and vegetables to treats for the *man'amko*.



SHAN SEMAN

The *man'amko* show off the fruits and vegetables that a group of farmers donated as part of celebrations for *Mes Lancheros*.

“This will save us at least two weeks of not buying vegetables. The money that we actually save, we can turn around and use it for other meat products that they [*man'amko*] haven’t tried for a while.”

Winter squash, apigigi, hot pepper, okra, lemon, banana, eggplant, pumpkin, and betel nut were just some of the goods donated.

“The *man'amko* feels appreciated...and respected,” Palacios said. “This will probably make them [farmers] more successful.”

Several other activities will

go on to celebrate *Mes Lancheros*. Borja said the farmers will make another donation of fruits and vegetables today to the CHC Volunteers Association, who will sell the produce at a minimal price for funds needed in the hospital.

Division of Agriculture director Donald Flores said the proceeds will go to the volunteer group, which, in turn, will use the money to buy medical equipment for the Commonwealth Health Center.

Other upcoming activities include the annual Saipan Agriculture Fair, which is on May 28-30.

pepsi

NMC's Compass offers Life programs for kids

The Northern Marianas College's Compass unit is offering new, exciting summer youth LIFE programs called Project LIFE and Camp LIFE.

Project LIFE (Lead Into Future Experiences) is a leadership development program for kids ages 12 to 14. This is the CNMI's only summer program that provides CNMI youth with exciting leadership training to develop them into lifelong learners and leaders in today's multicultural society.

Students will undergo leadership training through interactive and motivating workshops, discussions, and activities.

Project LIFE provides experiential learning in leadership skills, public speaking, stress management, team building, event planning, conflict mediation, goal setting, and more.

Week 1 will cover Introduction to Leadership, Week 2 is Personal Development, and Week 3 is Professional Development. Project LIFE will run from June 14 to July 2, 8am-noon and will cost \$150 per child.

“Children deserve to become leaders; help them get there,” the college said in a statement.

Camp LIFE (Lead, Imagine, Foster, Experience) is a summer program for children ages 8 to 11. The college said the program is designed to encourage children to explore their creativity, become entrepreneurs, exercise their athleticism, and develop new friendships.

During Week 1, students will learn about team building and the importance of working together through various indoor and outdoor discovery and strategy games. Week 2 is devoted to exposing children to the joys of entrepreneurship. Students will learn basic business concepts and put them to use by running their own business. They will also participate in a Conversational Japanese class, a relevant and useful language that is growing in importance in business all over the world. Week 3 will allow the students to explore and express their creativity through craft making.

Camp LIFE will run from June 14 to July 2, 1pm-4:30pm. Parents have the option to enroll their child daily, weekly or for the entire program. The cost will be \$20 per day, \$75 per week, or \$150 for 3 weeks.

Spaces are limited, so parents are urged to register today. Last day to register is June 9. For more information, contact Dawn Chrystal Kenney, Community Development Institute at 234-5498 Ext. 1814 or stop by NMC Building V, 2nd Floor.

The NMC Compass (Community Programs and Services) Unit facilitates lifelong learning by providing continuing education courses, short-term training programs, quality workforce education, and professional development training opportunities for government, business, industry, and other community organizations.

The following NMC Compass programs are behind Project LIFE and Camp LIFE: Community Development Institute, CREES-4-H, and the Small Business Development Center.

‘Stomp that Trash’ concert push environmental cause

Students of the Hopwood Junior High School would be stomping, drumming, and kicking up their heels in a free concert that would combine the island's native rhythm with environmental activism.

The concert, led by the school's music instructor, Ferdie Guinto and billed as “Stomp that Trash,” will be on May 21, 7pm at the Hafa Adai Fiesta Hall.

The 40-minute production will include audience participation and a short informative presentation from the Department of Public Work, which is

collaborating with the school on the project.

The musical production is meant to promote the idea to reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Students of HJHS spent a month practicing with drum cans, water bottles, basketball, broom, and sticks- to name a few.

“These guys have that thing—rhythm... Statistics shows that those who are involved in music end up doing well,” Guinto said.

Guinto has worked four years in several productions in Fiji. He has done shows with other age

groups but said that, “Junior High is pretty tough...but they [students] are really cooperative.”

“School is almost over...this gives us something to do,” said Abraham Reyes, a student involved in the concert. “The students have been performing in other schools, promoting the show.”

They want to extend their appreciation to all their sponsors—PIC, Hafa Adai Beach Hotel, CUC, MCV, Jen-Marz Auto Repair Shop, EQ Construction, Marianas Printing Service, Inc., and KCNM-FM. (Cassie Fejeran)

mt. carmel
CMYK

EPA fines firm \$15K for tank violations

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has fined the Cocos Lagoon Development Corp. \$15,518 for alleged federal underground storage tank violations on Saipan.

The company owned and operated two underground storage tanks at its power plant for the La Fiesta, San Roque shopping center. The two 15,000-gallon tanks contained diesel petroleum product used to run the facility's power generators.

"The federal rules are very clear about what an owner-operator needs to do in order to properly maintain an underground storage tank," said

DPS to set checkpoints Monday

The Department of Public Safety's Traffic Section will be conducting Occupant Protection and Child Restraint and Sobriety checkpoints on Monday, May 24.

The first setup will be on 2W Puerto Rico on the southbound lanes. This operation will start around 8am and will end around 9:15am.

The second setup will be on B/R Chalan Laulau by the New BJ Garden Restaurant on the southbound lanes. This operation will start around 3pm and will be terminated at about 4:15pm.

Each checkpoint conducted will last at least 75 minutes (1 hour 15 minutes) at each location. This activity is part of the department's efforts to deter and detect and ensure that all vehicle occupants are protected.

In addition, traffic officers will be conducting highway criminal interdiction's, saturation patrols, aggressive driver interdictions, and laser activities.

For more information, contact Sgt. Joseph Flores at 664-9084 to 86.

Beach Road closed Saturday

The Department of Public Safety's Traffic Section is informing the public that Beach Road Garapan from the Horiguchi Building north to the Garapan Fire Sub-Station II will be closed on Saturday, May 22, for the CNMI Council for Sports and Fitness Mass Walk.

Traffic heading south along Beach Road Garapan by the Bank of Guam traffic signal lights intersection will be routed east toward Happy Market.

Motorists are urged to use the 2W Highway and refrain from using Beach Road Garapan between the hours of 5:30am to 7am.

For more information, contact Sgt. Sylvan M. Rangamar 664-9084/5.

Jeff Scott, director of Waste Programs for the EPA Pacific Southwest Region. "Leak prevention and detection is critical to prevent tanks from contaminating the precious underground freshwater sources in Saipan."

This is the third time that EPA and CNMI Division of Environmental Quality officials have inspected La Fiesta. Yesterday's penalty is the first formal underground storage tank administrative action pursued in the CNMI.

The EPA alleges that, at various times, the company failed to:

- Properly perform leak detection on the tanks;
- Maintain records relating to the facility's lead detection system;
- Maintain records of having actually used leak detection;
- Use overfill prevention equipment on the tanks and;
- Provide financial responsibility for taking action in case of any accidental releases

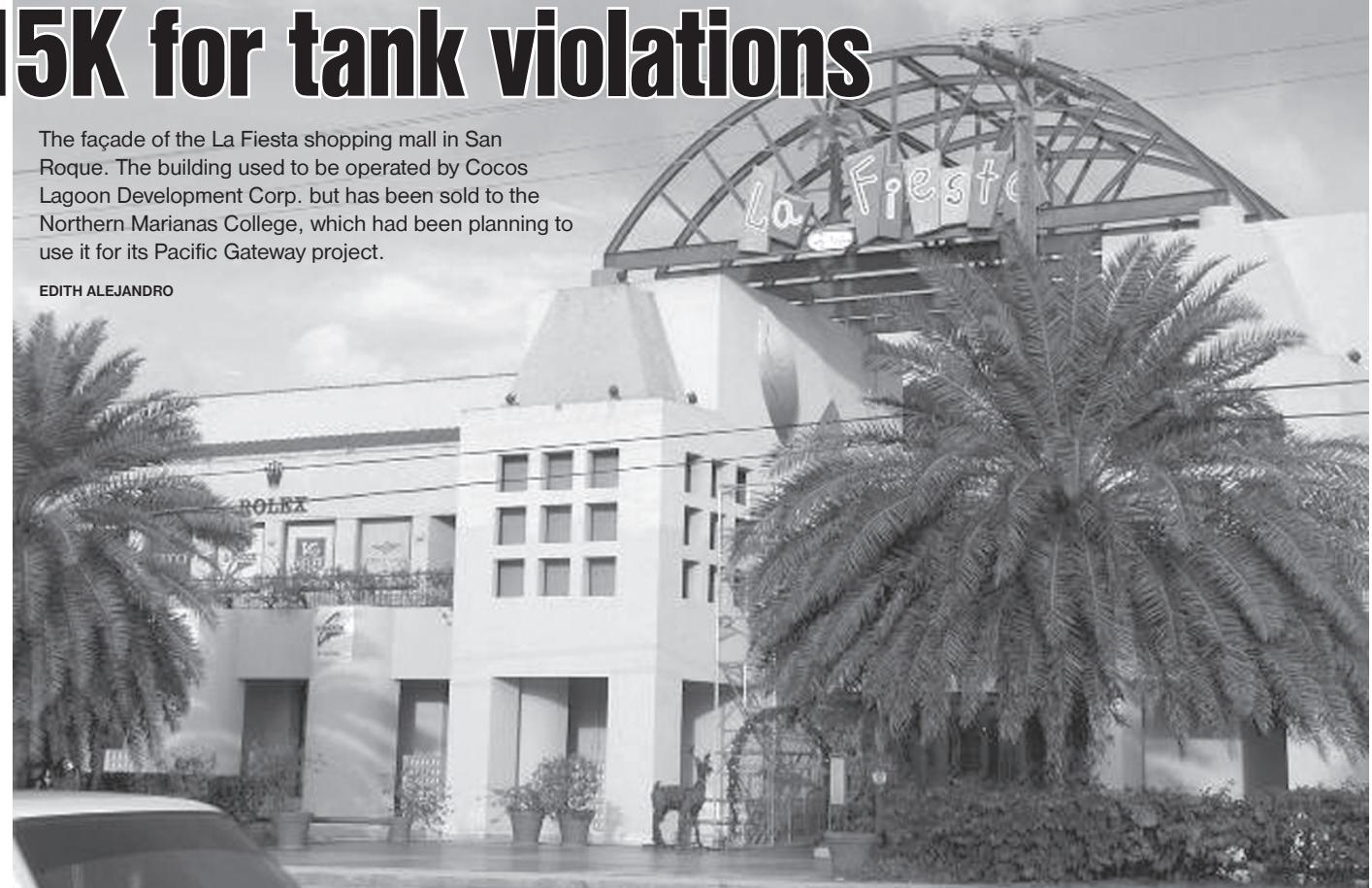
A December 1998 federal deadline required regulated underground storage tanks to have spill and overfill equipment, corrosion protection, and

release detection methods to prevent releases.

The EPA frequently conducts unannounced tank inspections and the CNMI DEQ is also conducting annual inspections of

The façade of the La Fiesta shopping mall in San Roque. The building used to be operated by Cocos Lagoon Development Corp. but has been sold to the Northern Marianas College, which had been planning to use it for its Pacific Gateway project.

EDITH ALEJANDRO



every underground storage tank facility in CNMI. Owners and operators who are cited with a field citation can correct the violations, submit documentation, and pay the settlement amount within 30 days. Formal administrative complaints may also be pursued for violations and may subject owners and operator to penalties of up to \$11,000 per violation per tank per day in

addition to the added cleanup costs for leaking tanks.

More information on the EPA's underground storage tank program can be obtained at www.epa.gov/OUST/.

Economic growth accelerating around globe

By LAURENCE FROST
AP BUSINESS WRITER

PARIS (AP)—Economic growth is accelerating in the major industrial nations but the performance gap between the United States and the 12-nation euro zone is widening, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said in a report published Tuesday.

In its twice-yearly Economic Outlook, the Paris-based OECD raised its combined growth forecast for its 30 industrialized member countries to 3.4 percent from the 3 percent predicted in November.

U.S. growth was seen at 4.7 percent, up from the 4.2 percent earlier forecast. But

the OECD cut its euro-area growth prediction to 1.6 percent from 1.8 percent.

"In the United States, the economy has already been growing well above potential, and other English-speaking countries, which took part only marginally in the past slowdown, are cruising ahead," the report said.

"The recovery is still, to a large extent, bypassing Continental Europe, where domestic demand and household expenditure remain surprisingly weak."

Given weak consumer confidence and low inflationary pressures in the 12-member euro zone, the OECD said there "seems to be a case" for an interest rate cut by the European Central Bank.

Looking ahead, the report said growth could be more evenly shared, since "the world recovery has achieved enough of a momentum to start pulling European economies out of their domestic anemia."

But it warned the gap may not close if the United States fails to rein in its swelling public deficit or if further dollar depreciation does more harm to European exports.

For 2005, the report predicted 3.3 percent growth for the OECD area, up from the 3.1 percent earlier forecast. It lowered both its U.S. and euro-zone forecasts by 0.1 percent, to 3.7 percent and 2.4 percent respectively.

The organization also sharply raised its Japanese growth predictions to 3 percent this year

and 2.8 percent in 2005—up from the 1.8 previously forecast for both years and said that six years of declining consumer prices in Japan should end in 2005, halting a fall that has hurt growth in the world's second largest economy.

Despite its better-than-expected outlook, however, the OECD said Japan needs to forge ahead with vital structural changes—including a cleanup of banks' bad debt—if it hopes to beat deflation for good and ensure long-term economic growth.

"Basically, we see deflation coming to an end next year," said Randall Jones, a senior OECD economist.

Japanese consumer prices have been falling since 1998,

as the country tried to pull itself out of a slump that started with the bursting of a real-estate and stock market bubble in the early 1990s. Weak consumer demand and piles of bad debt together with falling land prices and scores of uncompetitive companies all combined to depress consumer prices.

Falling prices are welcome to some consumers, but they also drag down wages and make it more difficult for debtors to repay loans.

The economy has rebounded in recent years, however, amid surging exports to the United States and China. The OECD said it expects Japan's gross domestic product will grow 3.0 percent in 2004 and 2.8 percent in 2005.

IMF chief urges US to rein in deficit

WASHINGTON (AP)—Rodrigo Rato, the next head of the International Monetary Fund, said Tuesday the United States should use its current economic prosperity to gain control of its soaring budget deficits.

He predicted that any increases in interest rates by America's Federal Reserve would be moderate.

Rato signaled no change in IMF policy during his first Washington news conference since he was selected last week by the group's executive board to succeed Horst Koe-



Horst Koe-hler as managing director.

The former finance minister of Spain said he would formally take over as head of the 184-nation lending institution some time in early June. But before he officially takes over, Rato said he planned to attend a meeting of finance officials of the Group of Eight leading industrial countries and Russia, who are meeting in New York later this month.

In addition to lecturing the United States to use the current period of strong growth to begin dealing with the federal budget deficit, Rato urged countries in Europe and Asia to keep pushing ahead with their economic reform efforts.

"We are appreciating right now an upswing in the world economy in most of the member countries, but that doesn't mean we don't have some risks that we should follow and analyze," he said.

Asked about the slide in financial markets in the United States and other countries as investors grow nervous about the possibility of higher interest rates, Rato said he believed markets are overreacting.



Atkins Kroll Inc. and food vendors donate to the Guam Crime Stoppers. Below they present a check to the American Cancer Society.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Atkins Kroll Inc. and food vendors donate to the Guam chapter of the American Red Cross. Below, they present a check to The Salvation Army.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



AK, food vendors donate to various groups

TAMUNING, Guam—Atkins Kroll Inc. and food vendors recently presented checks to the American Cancer Society, American Red Cross Guam Chapter, Guam Crime Stoppers, Make a Wish Foundation and the Salvation Army in support of their continued efforts and valuable assistance to the island of Guam.

The donations were based on 50 percent of the net proceeds of the food and drink concessions during the recent Beach Boys Concert.

"As AK celebrates 90 years of commitment of service to the community of Guam, we

are very proud to team up with Carl's Jr., Circle K, Domino's Pizza and Lone Star Steakhouse to extend our support to non-profit organizations whose objective is to provide assistance to our local community when needed," said AK president Robert Hernandez. "Their efforts to support our island's community is very important, valuable and greatly appreciated."

AK was established in 1914 and today is the leading automotive dealership on Guam carrying quality brands that include Toyota, Lexus, Chevrolet, and AC Delco.

Asia

Gunmen steal ballot boxes in Philippines



Manila's public workers clean up election posters on a street Tuesday morning, May 11, 2004.

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's election foe claimed he was being cheated out of a victory, and police said Wednesday that gunmen attacked two northern town halls, killing a policeman and burning presidential ballots.

A nationwide survey projected that Arroyo earned 41 percent of the vote while movie star Fernando Poe Jr. earned 32 percent. But a "quick count" by an election watchdog group showed Poe leading early Wednesday by about 40 percent to 36 percent.

Poe's camp has alleged widespread irregularities in Monday's voting and he urged his backers to "remain firm in our belief in the truth that victory is ours." About 3,000 supporters gathered in Manila's financial district Tuesday night, singing, "FPJ, the hope of the nation."

Poe outlined a list of alleged problems in Monday's polling, including men in military uniforms opening boxes to burn ballots, vote-buying, harassment of voters and switching of ballots.

Arroyo praised what she called relatively orderly balloting but urged Filipinos to remain "vigilant until the last vote is counted." The military warned against violence or mass protests and said it would use "necessary force" to maintain order.

Arroyo did not directly respond to polls showing her ahead. But

election-related deaths since December, compared with the 67 deaths during the 1998 presidential campaign.

About 15 armed men barged into the San Mariano town hall in the northern province of Isabela late Tuesday, gunning down one policeman and wounding another, national police spokesman Joel Goltiao said. The men snatched six ballot boxes, then burned the ballots and the elections office, Goltiao said.

About two hours later, 16 armed men entered a municipal

building in nearby Jones town, about 185 miles north of Manila, and burned returns, Goltiao said. There were no injuries.

It was not known whether the same group carried out the attacks, but most of the violence has been linked to local elections. Isabela—a mountainous, log-producing province rife with Marxist guerrillas—has a history of election-related violence.

The Philippine military warned Tuesday against violence or massive protests, saying troops would use "necessary

force" to maintain order if losing parties try to stir up trouble.

The opposing camps already accuse one another of planning to manipulate the outcome by fixing the vote or overturning it through violence and mass demonstrations.

The 113,000-strong Philippine military remains on high alert and "will not hesitate to implement its plan and employ the necessary force to maintain the tranquility and order," military spokesman Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero told The Associated Press.

Poe said Tuesday he believed he had won but was being cheated, telling reporters that many people were unable to vote and urging his supporters to "tightly guard the counting."

The election in this poor Southeast Asian nation of 84 million people ends the constitutionally fragile period following the January 2001 ouster of the last elected president, Joseph Estrada, for alleged massive corruption and misrule. Estrada is a former film star and a friend of Poe.

TRIBUNE GRAD

World

Iraqi cleric calls for end to fighting

By CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA
AP WRITER

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—Iraq's most respected Shiite cleric urged both U.S. soldiers and a radical cleric's militia Tuesday to withdraw from two Shiite holy cities where fighting has raged near some of Shia Islam's holiest shrines.

A statement released in Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Husseini al-Sistani's name urged Iraqis not to travel to Najaf to join protests called by cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. Instead, he said, Shiites should join rallies elsewhere to demand that Najaf and Karbala "be rid of all armed manifestations."

However, the statement, which al-Sistani's aides distributed to reporters after nighttime skirmishes in Najaf, did not include the ayatollah's personal seal nor was it posted on his Web site, as is customary with religious decrees, or fatwas, which are binding on his followers.

An aide to al-Sistani, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the ayatollah wants both the Americans and al-Sadr's al-Mahdi Army out of the holy cities in southern Iraq but has avoided an explicit call because he knows neither side is prepared to accept it.

Brig. Gen. Mark Hertling, deputy commander of the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division, said there were indications that al-Sadr was trying to bring in fighters to reinforce his militia in Karbala, about 50 miles south of Baghdad.

"We are doing our best to intercept those people," Hertling said at Camp Lima, a military base on the outskirts of the city.

U.S. officials have insisted that al-Sadr disband his militia and answer charges in the murder of a rival cleric in April 2003. Al-Sadr has insisted that the Americans agree to defer charges until a new Iraqi government is elected next January.

In Baghdad, meanwhile, Iraqi officials announced that the FBI would



AP
A U.S. Army soldier arrives at the scene of a burning pipeline at the al-Rashidiah district, outside Baghdad, Iraq, Tuesday, May 18, 2004. The cause of the fire is unknown.

help an Iraqi team investigate Monday's killing of the head of the U.S.-appointed Iraqi Governing Council, and the U.S. administrator in Iraq vowed to continue the transfer of sovereignty to Iraqis as scheduled.

"Terrorists are trying to stop Iraq's march to sovereignty and peace," U.S. administrator L. Paul Bremer said at a memorial service in Baghdad for Izzadine Saleem, who was killed by

a suicide bomber near coalition headquarters. "They will not succeed."

"We must continue the political process leading to an interim government next month and to elections next year," he added.

The killing was a major setback to American efforts to stabilize Iraq just six weeks before the June 30 handover of sovereignty.

The U.S.-led coalition is struggling

UN refugee chief says image damaged

WASHINGTON (AP)—Humanitarian workers are hamstrung by a perception among Muslims that they are enemies of Islam, the U.N. refugee chief said Tuesday, a situation that makes it impossible to know when his agency can return to Iraq.

The U.N. Refugee Agency, International Committee of the Red Cross and other humanitarian agencies "have been badly damaged by the demonization of others," said Ruud Lubbers, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and former Dutch prime minister.

In a speech at the National Press Club, Lubbers blamed President Bush's rhetoric for some of the problem, specifically his characterization

of Iraq, Iran and North Korea as an "axis of evil" in his first State of the Union address, in 2002.

"We've been damaged by the 'axis of evil,' this ... vision of the world as split between the good and the evil," Lubbers said. "Unfortunately, like others we are paying the price for this, for we have also come to be seen as part of a supposed Western crusade against the world of Islam."

Recent security problems and tension in southern Iraq have led the United Nations to suspend UNHCR convoys carrying Iraqi refugees back from Iran, he said. Threats of illegal checkpoints, hijackings and other security problems are some of

the reasons local transporters refuse to carry passengers beyond Basra, Lubbers said.

The attack in August, in which a truck bomber struck the Baghdad headquarters of the United Nations, has "left a horrible legacy but a true dilemma for humanitarian workers on how, and indeed if, our work can be conducted without jeopardizing our own lives," Lubbers said. The top U.N. envoy in Iraq was killed with 22 other people.

Al-Qaida, the international terror network that was the original target of Bush's war on terror, purportedly has put a bounty on the heads of U.N. staff, killed or captured, he said.

Iraq inmates' kin want justice for abuse

ABU GHRAIB, Iraq (AP)—On the eve of the first court-martial in the Iraq prisoner abuse scandal, relatives of those still held at Abu Ghraib prison said Tuesday the only suitable punishment would be death—illustrating the potential gap in expectations in the case.

"If they actually committed such offenses, they should be executed," said Odai Ibrahim, 55, as he waited in a line with hundreds of other Iraqis to visit relatives at the prison on the western outskirts of Baghdad—notorious as the site of executions and torture during Saddam Hussein's regime.

But the first defendant, Spc. Jeremy C. Sivits, faces only a year in prison, a fine, reduction in pay and a bad conduct discharge. He has cooperated with authorities and is expected to testify against the others, who face more serious charges.

Three others—Staff Sgt. Ivan Frederick, Sgt. Javal Davis, and Spc. Charles Graner Jr.—will be arraigned

to contain an insurgency in Sunni areas north and west of Baghdad, as well as an uprising in a Shiite district of Baghdad and the Shiite heartland to the south led by al-Sadr.

Coalition officials estimate that about 265 Iraqi fighters have been killed since the uprising began in early April. According to an Associated Press tally, 254 Iraqis have been killed since April 5.

Honduras jail fire was arson?

SAN PEDRO SULA, Honduras (AP)—Survivors of a prison fire that officials blamed on a short-circuit claimed Tuesday that the inferno that killed more than 100 gang members was intentionally set by fellow inmates.

A similar fire that broke out a year ago during clashes at the nearby La Ceiba prison killed 70 gang members. As in Monday's fire, last year's blaze burned only a cellblock housing the gangs.

Most of those killed were members of the feared Mara Salvatrucha 13 gang, characterized by tattoos of saints, skulls, daggers and dice.

"Many of the guys who died in there were in jail just because they had tattoos," said 18-year-old gang member Olmon Alberto Contreras, who lay in a hospital bed with severe burns.

At least 103 of 186 prisoners in the cell block—the only one of 18 at the prison to burn—died in the blaze at the state prison in San Pedro Sula, 110 miles north of the capital, Tegucigalpa.

Some were burned to death; others died from smoke inhalation. The death toll was expected to rise as many of the survivors lay in hospital beds with burns over as much as half their bodies.

The government acknowledged overcrowding and poor conditions in Honduras jail cells and promised to provide more funding.

But some survivors alleged that other inmates set the fire by throwing gasoline

Wednesday before Sivits goes on trial. The arraignments and the Sivits trial will be open to media coverage. Nine Arab newspaper or broadcast journalists are among 34 news organizations to be allowed seats in the courtroom.

The U.S. military hopes the presence in the courtroom of such prominent Arab media as the Al-Arabiya and Al-Jazeera television networks will demonstrate American resolve to determine who was responsible for the abuse and punish the guilty.

However, the U.S. military has barred the broadcast of Wednesday's hearings on radio or television, and is prohibiting all recording devices and mobile phones from the courtroom.

Pictures of prisoners subjected to sexual humiliation and other brutality at the hands of American military police guards have generated a wave of international outrage and prompted some to question the Bush administration's commitment to bringing democracy to Iraq.

Before dawn Tuesday, U.S. troops killed nine fighters loyal to al-Sadr in Karbala, said Mutaz al-Hasani, a witness who saw their bodies. Ten Iraqi fighters were wounded in the clashes near the city's Imam Hussein and Imam Abbas shrines.

At least five Iraqi insurgents were killed during clashes in Karbala later in the day, according to Capt. Noel Gorospe, a U.S. military spokesman there.

into their cell block and lighting the fuel, while officials stood by and did nothing. The gang members say the guards' apathy was part of a government strategy of elimination that began with last year's federal anti-gang law.

"When you sow hatred, you reap hatred," Contreras said. "As you treat us, we will treat you. If you hit me, I must seek revenge."

Government authorities deny they are out to exterminate the gangs but say tough action is necessary to control an increasingly violent force blamed for everything from common crimes to grisly homicides.

Many of those killed Monday were detained during the country's recent crackdown on the estimated 100,000 gang members in Honduras.

In August, President Ricardo Maduro succeeded in passing legislation outlawing gangs and establishing minimum sentences of 12 years for their members.

Authorities initially said the fire in San Pedro was caused by an overheated refrigerator because inmates said they heard the appliance explode. Firefighters later said it appeared an air conditioner short-circuit was to blame and the resulting fire ignited bedding and curtains. They said they found about 75 electrical devices - air conditioners, fans and refrigerators - in the 30-by-45-foot cell block.

Israeli troops kill 20 in Gaza camp raid

RAFAH, Gaza Strip (AP)—Under heavy cover fire from helicopters, Israeli troops combed this refugee camp for weapons and gunmen Tuesday in the biggest Gaza offensive in years. Twenty Palestinians were killed, including two teenagers shot as they gathered laundry.

The death toll was the highest one-day total since 35 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank city in Ramallah on April 5, 2002.

International condemnation mounted against the operation, and the United States said it was asking Israel for "clarification." The United Nations and European Union demanded an end to the incursion, which Israeli security officials said would last at least a week.

Early Wednesday, Israeli forces entered the refugee camp next to the West Bank town of Jenin, sparking an exchange of fire that left an armed Palestinian dead, the military said. Israel Radio said the casualty was a local leader of the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, linked to Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement.

Around the same times, another Al Aqsa militant was killed in an exchange of fire with Israeli soldiers in the West Bank city of Nablus, witnesses said. Soldiers also searched for terror suspects in three apartment buildings, after ordering about 200 people to leave.

In Rafah, a crowded camp of 90,000 people near the Egyptian border, Palestinian families sought refuge from the rocket and machine-gun fire in the innermost rooms of their homes.

Electrician Khaled Al-Assar, 38, said he sat with his wife and five children in one room of their house as gunfire rattled all around and a missile landed

nearby, shattering windows.

"The kids were terrified, there was very loud boom, they started screaming and crying," he said.

Not everyone stayed inside, and the consequences could be deadly. Ahmed Mughayer, 13, and his sister Asma, 16, were killed by Israeli fire when they ventured onto the roof of their three-story apartment building to bring in laundry, their father Mohammed said.

Mughayer said his wife had told Asma not to go out because of the shooting. "Asma said, 'Don't worry, I'll be careful,'" he said.

The Israeli army said the aim of "Operation Rainbow" was to destroy weapons-smuggling tunnels and arrest Palestinian militants. It said it did not intend to demolish large numbers of Palestinian homes. Troops tore down four homes Tuesday, witnesses said.

Last week, Israel destroyed about 100 houses, making more than 1,000 Palestinians homeless.

Troops moved Tuesday into the Tel Sultan neighborhood on the outskirts of the Rafah camp. Bulldozers began tearing up a road to separate the neighborhood from the rest of the camp, and soldiers backed by about 70 armored vehicles conducted house-to-house searches, sometimes using bulldozers to knock down doors.

The army said most of the casualties were gunmen killed by missiles or machine-gun fire as they prepared to attack troops.

Residents said at least nine civilians were among the dead. At least 42 Palestinians were wounded.

Some Palestinians tried to reach safer ground. Thousands have left their homes in Rafah since the weekend, hauling away their possessions on tractors and donkey carts.

In all, 19 Palestinians in

Rafah were killed by Israeli fire—10 in two missile strikes, and nine by machine-gun fire, said Dr. Moawiya Hassanain, a Palestinian Health Ministry official. A 20th man was killed while handling explosives.



Smoke billows from the Palestinian refugee camp of Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip, Tuesday, May 18, 2004.

Nations urged to meet costs of peacekeeping

UNITED NATIONS (AP)—Secretary-General Kofi Annan urged the 191 U.N. member states to meet the "surging demand" for U.N. peacekeeping troops, which could add an extra \$1 billion to this year's \$2.82 billion peacekeeping budget.

Last month, he said, more than 53,000 troops, military observers and civilian police were serving in 15 U.N. missions around the world from East Timor to Lebanon and Ivory Coast - the highest number since 1995.

"Even more missions loom on the horizon," he said. "The Security Council has recently authorized a new mission in Haiti and has expanded the existing mission in Ivory Coast. Missions are being planned for Burundi and Sudan."

Annan told an open Security Council meeting that a recent study by Oxford University economists found that the aver-

age economic cost of civil wars averaged \$128 billion a year in lost revenue and output.

Measured against this loss, he said, "peacekeeping is extremely cost-effective."

"Our duty must be to meet this demand and to seize the opportunities to bring longstanding conflicts to an end," Annan said. "For millions of our fellow human beings, U.N. peacekeeping missions offer their best—and sometimes only—hope of emerging from conflict towards a safe and stable future."

A statement adopted by the Security Council at the end of the meeting called on member states to provide the United Nations "with full political and financial support to meet these challenges effectively." It also urged them to provide sufficient levels of trained troops, police, and civilian personnel.

TRIB GRAD AD

Life & Style

By JIM SHEA
The Hartford Courant



Let's get those Swedes out of our bedrooms

Ikea, the furniture maker, has just come out with another survey on bedroom behavior.

They do this a lot. They say these surveys help them understand their customers.

I don't know about that. I'm starting to think that Ikea may be Swedish for nosey, or voyeur, or maybe perv.

Why, for example, do they need to know that 13 percent of Northeasterners sleep in the nude?

Worse still, why do we need to know this?

At the grass-roots level, this type of data is not an abstraction, it's an affliction.

It's like having a vision of a naked Barry Manilow singing "Copacabana" stuck in your head.

I mean, since establishing that 3.5 of my co-workers sleep in the buff - buff being quite a stretch in this regard - I have spent countless hours considering who they might be. (I'm sure of three, I'm still working on the half.)

As a result, I am now unable to suppress images of these individuals getting up for a glass of water in the middle of the night.

This is not healthful. In fact, I think I'm coming down with some kind of Post Traumatic Breast Syndrome.

Here is another piece of Ikea-induced information we would be better off not knowing: 20 percent of Americans have sex outside of the bedroom.

Which begs the question, where?

Don't know. Why? Because the survey didn't say.

Thus, not only does this force one to go through life aware that couples you know may have sex out of bed-lock, but it also leaves it up to you to determine exactly where.

This can create a tremendous amount of anxiety, particularly when you visit someone's home:

Do I want to sit on this couch?

What was the last entrée served at this table?

Can that chandelier hold two people?

Still another problem arising from Ikea's serial surveying is that it leads to baseless assumptions:

Why do one out of three couples sleep with their back to each other? (A treaty?)

Why do 12 percent of people in the Northeast turn to romance to help fall asleep? (No cable?)

Why do 39 percent of Easterners put their bed in the middle of the bedroom. (See above, chandelier?)

And why do 54 percent of Southerners put their bed against the wall? (Better mileage?)

For no reason other than misery loves company, let me leave you with this one last factoid:

According to the Ikea survey, people 55 and older are more than twice as likely as younger people to sleep in the raw.

"Her name was Lola, she was a showgirl ..."

By ANNELI NERMAN
AP WRITER

Fifteen Czarist-era Faberge eggs were triumphantly unveiled in a Kremlin museum Tuesday, three months after a Russian billionaire purchased the collection as part of a campaign to bring home Russia's cultural heritage.

The Easter eggs, treasures of intricately worked jewels and precious metals by jeweler Carl Faberge, are the highlight of the "Faberge: Lost and Recovered" exhibit in the Patriarch's Palace Museum in Moscow's historic Kremlin.

The collection includes nine eggs created for Czars Alexander III and Nicholas II as gifts for the Czars' Maria and Alexandra. Only the Kremlin Armory has more, with 10 of the 50 existing eggs. The most valuable item—the Coronation Egg—is estimated by Sotheby's to be worth \$24 million. Six eggs were made for others, including the British Duke of Marlborough.

The items exhibited are part of the 180-piece collection that Viktor Vekselberg, vice president of the oil company TNK-BP, bought from the estate of U.S. publisher Malcolm S. Forbes earlier this year for his Bond of Times cultural foundation.

Bond of Times is tasked with purchasing and bringing home objects of art and culture. Vekselberg is Russia's third richest man with an estimated \$5.9 billion fortune.

Substantial amounts of art were taken abroad by aristocrats and wealthy merchants fleeing the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. Much of what was left was sold off by Soviet authorities, who were both strapped for cash and ideologically opposed to



The Faberge Coronation egg is on display in the Patriarch's Palace in the Kremlin, Moscow, Tuesday, May 18, 2004. The egg was presented by Russian Czar Nicholas II to his wife, the Empress Alexandra in 1897. AP

aristocratic excess.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union, Russians have become increasingly interested in regaining their departed treasures. Wealthy Russians have gone on art buying sprees in the West, but few of the pieces have been brought home.

The return of the Faberge collection was praised by the Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography head Mikhail Shvydkoi as proof that the recent scrapping of a 30 percent import duty on objects of significant cultural value was encouraging their repatriation.

It was, he said, also testimony to a

psychological change among collectors who no longer fear making their acquisitions known.

Bond of Times representative Andrei Shtorkh declined to give the exact purchase price for the collection but said it was over \$100 million.

Countering speculation that Vekselberg would donate the collection to the state, Bond of Times board chairman Vladimir Voronchenko said the Faberge collection would remain private.

"We don't see anything shameful in the revival of the tradition of enlightened collecting," he said.

Only about 100 serious private and

corporate collections exist in Russia, according to Shvydkoi, who said this sector must grow if a normal cultural environment is to develop in Russia.

Voronchenko said Tuesday that Vekselberg's foundation was planning two more acquisitions that are of even greater significance than the Faberge collection.

The Faberge exhibit which opens to the public on Saturday will also be shown in the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg and in Yekaterinburg, where the Russian imperial family was executed in 1918. It then travels to the Siberian cities of Irkutsk and Tyumen.

'Odd Couple' star Tony Randall, 84

NEW YORK (AP)—Tony Randall, who served as a fussy foil for Rock Hudson and Doris Day, David Letterman and Johnny Carson and, most famously, Jack Klugman on "The Odd Couple," has died at 84 after a long illness.

Randall, who had been hospitalized since December when he developed pneumonia after heart bypass surgery, died in his sleep Monday night at NYU Medical Center. His wife, Heather Harlan Randall—who had made him a father for the first time at age 77—was by his side.

"He was the funniest man in movies and on television, and nothing was as much fun as working with him," the 80-year-old actress said from Carmel, Calif. "I'm so glad that his last few years with his wife and children were so happy. I loved him very much and miss him already."

"Tony Randall's passion for live theatre was unmatched," Jed Bernstein, president of the League of American

Broadway's marquee lights were being dimmed in his honor Tuesday night.

Day remembered him Tuesday as being "so brilliant, funny, sweet and dear, that it was as if God had given him everything." Randall played the fussbudget pal in Hudson-Day movies such as 1959's "Pillow Talk" and 1961's "Lover Come Back."

"He was the funniest man in movies and on television, and nothing was as much fun as working with him," the 80-year-old actress said from Carmel, Calif. "I'm so glad that his last few years with his wife and children were so happy. I loved him very much and miss him already."

"Tony Randall's passion for live theatre was unmatched," Jed Bernstein, president of the League of American



Actor Tony Randall and his wife Heather pose for photographers on opening night of the Tribeca Film Festival on May 6, 2003 in New York. AP

Theatres and Producers, said in a statement. "He was a vociferous advocate for the proposition that serious plays are the lifeblood of our culture."

He was best-known, though, for playing fastidious photographer Felix Unger opposite Klugman's Oscar Madison on "The Odd Couple," the sitcom based on Neil Simon's play and movie.

In September, during a speech to the National Funeral Directors Association, Randall joked about how he envisioned his own ceremony: President Bush and Vice President Cheney would show up to pay their respects, but they'd be turned away because his family knows he didn't like them.

He said funerals should be planned as a celebration of life—and "a touch of humor doesn't hurt a bit."

Toby Lightman shines brightly in debut

By Rashod D. Ollison
THE BALTIMORE SUN

As she walks the streets of New York City on a "really pretty" afternoon, Toby Lightman talks about pushing herself. The pop newcomer is on her cell phone, discussing her debut, "Little Things": the music and her involvement in its creation.

"You get one chance, and there is no turning back," says Lightman. "I was in the studio every day coming up with the parts, playing the guitar or telling people which parts to play. I was into the whole process."

The CD has generated quite a buzz—mainly because of Lightman's powerful pipes

and distinctive phrasing. It also doesn't hurt that she's easy on the eyes: a thin, stylish 25-year-old blonde whose vocals are warm, assured and soulful without falling into clichés. No Mariah Carey-like melisma and strained high notes. At times, Lightman, who wrote or co-wrote all 12 songs on "Little Things," evokes the noisy rock-pop of Res, the vocal tartness of Nelly Furtado and the earnest soulfulness of Lauryn Hill. But Lightman's sound, accompanied by her bright acoustic guitar playing, is her own: real, exuberant, brimming with feeling.

"I listen to so many different kinds of music—to old soul to hip-hop to classic rock," she

said. "So it's hard to pin down my influences. Subconsciously, all of it comes out during the writing and singing, I guess: Etta James, Aretha Franklin, Mary J. Blige—there are so many."

The Philadelphia-born, New Jersey-raised singer-songwriter-guitarist didn't grow up in a musical household. Her father owns an environmental protection company; mom is a representative for a greeting-card company. Her folks were marginally into Top 40, doo-wop, blues and jazz. But "it wasn't a family that bestowed its musical tastes on me," Lightman said. "My uncle on my dad's side is a folk singer. But I just kinda got into music on my own."

As a child, she studied violin and fell in love with Stevie Wonder records. But Lightman didn't seriously think of music as a career option until college. While a student at the University of Wisconsin, the artist sang in cover bands and learned to play the guitar in her spare time. Lightman also started composing her own songs.

After graduation, she moved to New York to make a name for herself in the world of pop. A chance meeting with Wyclef Jean led him to produce the singer's demo, which found its way to Peter Zizzo, the producer who helped guide the careers of Vanessa Carlton and Avril Lavigne. He surrounded Lightman's

expressive voice and guitar with highly marketable production, and the artist signed with Lava/Atlantic Records early last year.

"We spent nine months on the album," Lightman says. "If you spend nearly a year recording an album, you hope you like it. I do, by the way."

It is a likable CD, though Zizzo's productions—flat programmed drums, echoing synths and jarring electric guitar solos—sound dated and frustratingly bland at times. Soul-inspired riffs and embellishments permeate Lightman's vocal approach on "Coming Back to You." And Sheryl Crow comes to mind on the swaggering "Voices." Lightman's ener-

getic singing makes the most boring moments bearable, and she shines when the busy instrumentation melts away—leaving just her voice, guitar and a subtle rhythm track: "Front Row" and "Everyday" are highlights.

Walking around the city she calls home these days, Lightman sounds confident. The media buzz about her album, the warm reception at radio, the regular rotation on MTV—all of that is just fine. But her chief concern is keeping it real, staying true to her artistic spirit.

"My main goal is to be me and not make just what's hot at the time," Lightman said. "If people like it, my career will keep going. It's that simple."

Jill Scott readies follow-up to debut CD

By NEKESA MUMBI MOODY
AP MUSIC WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Jill Scott's debut album, released four years ago, sold more than two million copies, garnered her critical acclaim and answered the question posed by its title: "Who Is Jill Scott?"

Now that her name is recognizable, she's ready to share some more. Her second studio album, "Beautifully Human, Words and Sounds, Vol. 2," is set for release on Aug. 31.

Although Scott released a live album in the interim, she told The Associated Press that she

wasn't ready to put out an album of full material until now.

"I could have just run back in and gone into the studio, but I would have been singing completely and totally about life on the road," the Philadelphia native said Monday in a phone interview.

"I needed to come back home, go grocery shopping, get a cat, spend some time with my husband ... just do everyday things."

She describes the new album as "warm, like a hug, like a first kiss, like a kitten purring next to

you. It sounds so sweet, but it really is. It's sweet and sincere."

"Who Is Jill Scott? Words and Sounds, Vol. 1," with its rich, soulful grooves coupled with the neosoul diva's poetic flair, garnered instant critical praise, though it took some time to become a wide success. But by 2001, Scott was a platinum star who had three Grammy nominations.

Scott, 32, knows there will be pressure to replicate her success. But she's not worried—or anticipating huge initial sales.



'American Idol' star sang karaoke to hone skills

SNELLVILLE, Ga. (AP)—Diana DeGarmo was preparing for stardom long before anyone heard of "American Idol." The 16-year-old jokes that when born, she "came out singing"—which is only a slight exaggeration.

In kindergarten, she impressed audiences enough to perform on a CNN talk show. By age 9, she was honing her skills at local restaurants on karaoke nights.

"People would think they were playing the CD or radio," said Alicia Stephens, a good friend of DeGarmo's mother, Brenda. "People would come out of the back room of the restaurant and they couldn't believe this little girl was standing there singing."

DeGarmo's reputation quickly spread, and soon she was singing the national anthem at Atlanta Braves and Thrashers games. She even earned the nickname "the national anthem girl."

"I remember when we opened our football stadium, she was only in the fifth grade but she came over and sang," said Nancy Fowler, community school director at Shiloh High School, where DeGarmo now is a junior.

Earlier this season, "Idol" judge Simon Cowell accused DeGarmo of being too young



"American Idol" finalist Diana DeGarmo sings during a ceremony where she was honored as "Mayor for the Day" of her hometown, Snellville, Ga., Thursday, May 13, 2004.

to compete on the show—but DeGarmo may have more experience in front of judges than the older contestants.

Last year, she was a finalist on the NBC show "America's Most Talented Kid," and she held the crown of Miss Teen Georgia 2002. She also has appeared in numerous other

beauty contests, commercials and modeling gigs.

DeGarmo finally won over Cowell last week. She was praised by all the "Idol" judges during a disco week that earned her a spot as one of three finalists. One of the three will be eliminated at the end of Wednesday's episode; the win-

ner of the Fox TV show will be chosen May 26.

"I'm gonna take that back," a smiling Cowell said of his previous criticism after DeGarmo's performance.

"Now he's kind of seeing that I can hold my own," DeGarmo said.

Her previous experience before judges and TV cameras gave DeGarmo time to sharpen her skills in diplomacy. She is adept at sidestepping leading questions by reporters about Cowell or other contestants and instead spends more time bragging about her Southern roots.

Born in Birmingham, Ala., DeGarmo has spent all her school years in Snellville, an Atlanta suburb that has long advertised its motto: "Snellville: Where everybody is somebody."

When she returned to Snellville for a welcome-home celebration and was presented the key to the city by the mayor, DeGarmo said, "I miss sweet tea and Snellville and southern talk. ... Southern people are the best people out there."

Snellville mayor Jerry Oberholzer is relishing the publicity.

"It's been really exciting," he said. "It has just exploded. The way she talks up the city, you couldn't ask for anything better."

wallace

ABC appoints Vargas to replace Walters

By DAVID BAUDER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—ABC News on Tuesday appointed Elizabeth Vargas to replace Barbara Walters as co-host of the newsmagazine “20/20,” and hired British celebrity interviewer Martin Bashir for the show.

Vargas has been a frequent fill-in on various ABC News broadcasts and a reporter for its newsmagazine. She’ll be teamed with John Stossel on “20/20,” which retained its Friday time slot in the fall schedule announced by the network on Tuesday.

Walters was the show’s original co-host since 1979, and will

continue doing interview specials for the network.

Bashir, no stranger to ABC audiences, will fill Walters’ role in competition for the big celebrity interviews.

His interview with Michael Jackson was seen by 27 million people in February 2003, and won the enmity of the star, who sold his version of his story to Fox. ABC has also shown other Bashir programs about the late Princess Diana and an investigation into a scandal on the British version of “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire.”

ABC’s other newsmagazine will go back to the name “Primetime Live” and go back



Walters Vargas

ing news,” said Shelley Ross, the show’s executive producer.

That means tougher hours for hosts Charles Gibson and Diane Sawyer, who also anchor “Good Morning America.” So

they’ll be joined by a rotating

team of Chris Cuomo, Cynthia McFadden and John Quinones as anchors, Ross said.

ABC is also starting a weekend edition of “Good Morning America” in the fall. After it was abandoned several years ago in a cost-cutting move, ABC ceded weekend news territory to NBC and CBS, and was criticized for moving slowly on news stories that broke on the weekends.

Bill Weir, a former sports reporter at the ABC affiliate in Los Angeles, was appointed host of the weekend “Good Morning America.”

ABC will pair him with another host, but that person hasn’t been named yet.

Billy Joel signs book publishing deal



AP
Billy Joel arrives for the Tony Awards at Radio City Music Hall, on June 8, 2003, in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—First the Material Girl, now the Piano Man. Billy Joel has agreed to write two children’s books for Scholastic, the U.S. publisher of the “Harry Potter” novels.

The first book, “Goodnight My Angel,” will be published in September. The picture book will be based on a song of the same name that came out in 1993, as Joel and supermodel Christie Brinkley were divorcing. Joel wrote the song for their daughter, Alexa Ray, who was 7 years old.

Fallon signs off of ‘Saturday Night Live’

NEW YORK (AP)—Say goodbye to Jimmy Fallon on “Saturday Night Live.”

Fallon announced that he was leaving the comedy show at the end of his “Weekend Update” segment with Tina Fey on Saturday, the show’s last original episode of the season.

It was no surprise to NBC executives.

“He had made it clear that

“Reassuring children that they are not alone or could be abandoned is very important for their well-being,” Joel said in a statement Tuesday.

His second book, “New York State of Mind,” inspired by one of Joel’s songs, is tentatively scheduled for release in fall 2005.

Last fall, Madonna published the best-selling children’s book “The English Roses.” Other celebrities with children’s books include Jay Leno and Billy Crystal.

he wanted to move on and we wish him all the best,” Jeff Zucker, president of the NBC Universal Television Group, said Monday.

“SNL” gave Fallon a fond send-off, with a long skit featuring one of his signature characters, a nasally voiced and obnoxious radio disc jockey.

Fallon, 29, joined “Saturday Night Live” in 1998.

‘Martha Stewart Living’ going on hiatus

NEW YORK (AP)—With its star facing a possible prison sentence, the floundering “Martha Stewart Living” television show will be put on hiatus after the current season winds up, the show’s producers announced Tuesday.

In a related move, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia Inc. also will be eliminating 40 jobs in the television business segment by June 30, leaving 35 positions, spokeswoman Elizabeth Estroff said. The company will post a restructuring charge of up to \$2 million in the second quarter.

Production of the award-winning syndicated television show, distributed by King World Productions, will continue for the remainder of the 11th season, through September. However, its market reach has been nearly cut in half as affiliates

dropped the show following Stewart’s conviction.

“I am deeply sorry that it has become necessary for the show to go on hiatus until my personal legal situation is resolved,” Stewart said. “I hope to resume our close collaboration just as soon as I am able to do so.”

Tuesday’s announcement is the latest bad news for the multimedia company, which has struggled with disappointing sales, quarterly losses and a battered stock since Stewart was linked to an insider trading scandal almost two years ago.

Stewart was convicted March 5 for lying about why she sold 3,928 shares of ImClone Systems stock in 2001, just before the stock price plunged. Stewart, who owns 61 percent of the media empire, also stepped down as chief creative officer and

resigned from the company’s board. She assumed the title of founding editorial director.

Stewart had resigned as chairman and CEO last June after being indicted. She is expected to be sentenced June 17, and faces 10 to 16 months in prison.

Earlier this month, Martha Stewart Living reported a wider-than-expected loss for the first quarter and said that advertiser defections will likely push losses for the second quarter beyond Wall Street’s forecasts.

The company, which markets merchandise, magazines and TV shows, has always said that its television segment, which accounts for about 11 percent of total sales, remains its most vulnerable division. Revenues in its television division declined 36 percent to \$4.2 million in the first quarter. Publishing, which

accounts for about 55 percent of the company’s business, posted a 30 percent drop in revenue to \$23.9 million.

Merchandising, which makes up about 22 percent of overall business, has fared better, posting a slight gain to \$10.8 million from \$10.3 million a year ago.

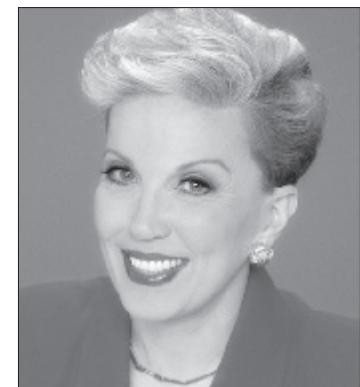
The company acknowledged in its conference call with investors in early May, that distribution of its syndicated television daily show had been reduced to 52 percent from 90 percent of U.S. local television markets. That was primarily due to CBS-owned and operated stations taking the show off the air after the conviction.

Even before her conviction, Stewart’s TV show’s future had been cloudy. King World was not actively trying to renew contracts in markets where the show aired.

Dream to be president is not out of girl’s reach

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR READERS: I’m still receiving fascinating letters in support of the 13-year-old girl who was ridiculed by her teacher and classmates for revealing that she’d one day like to be president of the United States. Read on:



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I read the letter from “I Have a Dream” and would like to offer her encouragement:

DEAR “I HAVE A DREAM”: I was touched

by your letter to Dear Abby, and I want you to know that you can become the president of the United States because of who you are, not in spite of it. I have no doubt a woman will be president one day, and America would be lucky to have you leading us every step of the way.

When young people like you express such a desire to make a difference in people’s lives, you should be applauded. Your teacher and your classmates were wrong to laugh at your dream.

What you already know, but they seem to have forgotten, is that we live in a country where every child, girl or boy, has an equal chance to grow up and become president, or a teacher, or a doctor, or a CEO, or the shopkeeper down the street. That is what makes our country unlike any place on Earth. Anything is possible.

But to do the things we believe in, we all have to work hard, do our best, and fight those who do not always believe in us. It is not easy to ignore their criticism, and it is tough to look beyond their doubts. But remember, doubters never made America a better place. It is people like you—people who dream big and are filled with hope—who make a difference in this world.

Always remember that the great thing about America is that you can become president, and you should never let anyone tell you different.

SEN. JOHN KERRY, WASHINGTON, D.C.

DEAR SEN. KERRY: To say that you are a busy man these days is an understatement. That you would still reach out to help a child says volumes about you as a person.

DEAR ABBY: As the first woman elected Illinois state treasurer, the first woman re-elected to a statewide office in Illinois and the first woman to lead a major party in Illinois, I was appalled by the negative response the 13-year-old girl (“I Have a Dream”) received from her teacher, her guidance counselors and fellow students when she shared her dream of becoming president of the United States. As a woman who has fought hard to succeed in politics and government, I truly believe that service to your nation is a most rewarding career.

It is true a woman in politics does have disparities to overcome. For years, women fought for the right to vote, and today we continue to fight for equality in many careers.

Women in government can bring creativity, vision and commitment to the table. We come with a different mind-set than our male counterparts, which makes for better debate and legislation. Both parties need more recruitment of qualified females. Schools need to encourage young women to become interested in public service through career days and mentor programs.

I know that the first woman president is alive. Somewhere out there, a young girl is sitting in her classroom interested in becoming our nation’s first female commander in chief, and I wouldn’t be surprised if it’s her. Best of luck to you, Mrs. President!

JUDY BAAR TOPINKA, ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

CROSSWORD*By Eugene Sheffer***Ziggy®****STUMPED?**

For answers to today's crossword, call
1-800-226-5995! 10¢ per minute. Include
to identify pictures. (16 only) © King
Features Service, NYC.

Calvin and Hobbes**By Bill Waterson****Garfield®****By Jim Davis****Adam@home****By Bryan Basset****The Duplex****By Glenn McCoy****CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY**

Justin Jeffre, Sean Astin, Lesley Boone, Sally Jessy Raphael

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: Having a crusader attitude will make all the difference in the world this year. Be a little stubborn if you think you are right. Be diverse in all that you do and you will meet the demands being put on you and accomplish your goals. Your numbers are 2, 13, 17, 29, 31, 40

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD
IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2004 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19)

Push to make others aware of what you are doing and how you believe it will help everyone on some level. If you can sell your ideas to others, you will put yourself in a favorable position. ☐☐☐

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20)

This is a perfect day to make some much-needed adjustments. Opportunities will manifest themselves in the most unusual places, so don't hesitate to talk about your dreams. ☐☐☐

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20)

Keeping a secret will be of utmost importance today. By disclosing what you are up to, you could blow a deal or your cover. Work by yourself; question your motives. ☐☐☐

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22)

Do something creative today that can be used to benefit others. The more you do to help make reforms, the better. ☐☐☐

**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22)

You will be misled if you are too gregarious. Tone down and observe what others are doing. Advancement may be at stake. ☐☐

**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

You can find an ideal romantic partner if you get out and do things that interest you. Get involved in talks that will stimulate your mind and broaden your perspective about projects you want to pursue. ☐☐☐☐

**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

Prepare yourself well so that you can follow through with what's necessary as quickly as possible. Don't be lazy or waste time thinking about what you should be doing. ☐☐☐

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Partnerships will be a little hard to handle if you don't take precautions and fully prepare. You can get on with your plans and get the praise you deserve. ☐☐☐

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Your work ethics will pay off, so roll up your sleeves and work alongside others for best results. Your team-player approach will put you in a leadership position. ☐☐☐

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

You should be developing your ideas today. If you find someone particularly inspiring, spend time discussing your plans together. Love and romance will be on your doorstep. ☐☐☐☐

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Take the initiative to follow what you feel is the best path and refrain from being led astray. Prepare to take a pass on what others are asking of you. ☐☐

**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20)

Your involvement in good causes will be rewarded today. You will begin to see the results of a job well done. Someone unusual, but interesting, will want to get to know you better. ☐☐☐

BIRTHDAY BABY: You are proactive and never take the conventional route. Your outgoing nature always leads to adventure and excitement. You will chase your dreams until you reach your destiny.

Check out Eugenia's Web sites at astroadvice.com and eugenialast.com.

28 THURSDAY, MAY 20, 2004

Saipan Tribune

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

27

25

Sports

28 THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2003

SAIPAN TRIBUNE